

UDIS file

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STAT NOTE FOR: []
FROM: []
STAT SUBJECT: [] comments on leaks

STAT 1. At the 15 March 1983 meeting of the UDIS, [] arranged for
STAT [] former journalist [] and then a CIA staffer,
STAT to comment on leaks from his perspective as a long-time ~~journalist~~ news man.

STAT 2. [] opened by commenting that he thought the provision in
NSDD-84 calling for regulation of press contacts was a "non-starter" because there
were so many press contacts in social ~~xxxxxxx~~ environments which could not be
controlled by official regulation. He said that his journalistic experience
indicated that leaks come from: senior officials trying to implement policy;
junior officials trying to frustrate policy; spontaneous answers to questions *by* ~~from~~
journalists; and government personnel trying to ~~help~~ be helpful to journalists.

STAT [] stated that journalists usually don't write stories based on ~~xxxxx~~
single sources unless the source data is consistent with other known information.
As an exception, he cited a case in which then Assistant to the President Brzezinski,
in discussions with journalists on Soviet plans to intervene in Afghanistan, disclosed
STAT SCI material on Soviet military preparations. [] said most news stories
are built up from bits and pieces gathered over time. He stated that a great deal
of data on sensitive subjects ~~from~~ comes from official spokesmen speaking on a
background basis without attribution. He noted that journalists working a particular
subject will usually contact ~~desk~~ desk officers to try to get data. They generally
get turned down, he said. He advised that specialists on Congressional staffs can
STAT be very good sources, but noted that they usually deal only with a very small number
of journalists. [] said recently retired persons can be productive sources
through their ability to keep up fairly well with their former work using contacts
with still employed colleagues. He noted that the extensive coordination involved
in developing NIEs results in many people being exposed to sensitive data, thus

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STAT increasing the likelihood of leaks. He advised that, with few exceptions, outside contractors are not overly talkative with the press. [] stated that long-standing friendships or contacts give established journalists entrees which they can try to exploit. He said he had found a tendency on the part of officials to ~~think~~ think they were protesting intelligence sources and methods through generalizing classified information when they were talking to journalists. He stated that he didn't think recipients of the NID and ^{similar} ~~other~~ documents ~~intended for senior officials~~ paid any attention to the security warnings on those materials. He suggested ~~was~~ occasional use of a cover sheet stating in short, simple language that the very essence of the NID contents was sensitive, not just the details. He suggested further that the language and the format of such cover sheets be varied each time they are used to avoid losing customer attention through perceptions of stereotyping.

STAT 3. In response to ^a ~~question~~ question, [] said he didn't think the Washington Star's attitude ~~is~~ toward the INTElligence ~~Comm~~ Community was as adversarial as is that of the Post. He noted that journalists make and keep their reputations by writing interesting stories, and that there is a career risk in withholding a story on ~~the~~ national security grounds only to see another journalist dig out the same story later and publish it. He said he had seen items in the NID which appeared in the press the same day. He commented that this had to mean that someone with early access to the NID called a journalist immediately to pass on the data. He was asked if he thought the proposal to criminalize leaks by Government employees would meaningfully impact on leaks. He ~~replied~~ replied that he doubted it would affect established relationships between knowledgeable officials and serious journalists (which he defined as the elite of the Washington press corps). He said officials who wanted to plant an item in the press would generally use the Washington Post or the New York Times.

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4. In response to ~~a~~ a question about Jack Anderson's sources, said he thought Anderson probably got his material from low level personnel acting out of spite, ~~not~~ revenge, a desire to satisfy ego, or similar motives. Another

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security data. Yet another questioner asked if journalists ~~would~~ ~~ever~~ likely ever reveal their sources to investigators. said no, adding that if word ~~ever~~ got out that a journalist ~~cooperated~~ in a leak investigation, he'd better look for a job in a different field because no source would ^{deal} ~~cooperate~~ with him again.

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